

Anindilyakwa

Arnhem Land, Northern Territory



We must protect our sacred places and our way of living. We want to be able to live on our country in peace as our elders did and we want to be able to pass on our country to our children so that it guides and sustains them.

Groote Archipelago Traditional Owners

Spreading across the Groote Eylandt Archipelago in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) protects around 3,000 square kilometres of land surrounded by the rich marine environment of the Gulf.

Anindilyakwa became Australia's twentieth IPA when it was declared in June 2006. Its Traditional Owners strike a balance between protecting the land for conservation purposes and allowing for sustainable economic development and traditional resource use.

Since declaring their land an IPA, the Anindilyakwa community has focused on protecting traditional ecological knowledge as well as protecting cultural and visitor sites and marine estates. They have built resource management partnerships and capacity in their ranger workforce and are working hard to maintain the high biodiversity and pest free status of their country.

The Archipelago includes Groote Eylandt, Bickerton Island, and numerous smaller islands. Groote Eylandt itself is the third largest Australian island with an area of 2,687 square kilometres. Along with Dhimurru and Laynhapuy IPAs in north east Arnhem Land (declared 2001), Anindilyakwa forms an important part of the Arnhem Coast Bioregion.

The lands and seas of the Archipelago are Aboriginal country owned and managed by the Anindilyakwa speaking clans.

This ownership was not recognised until the last quarter of the twentieth century.

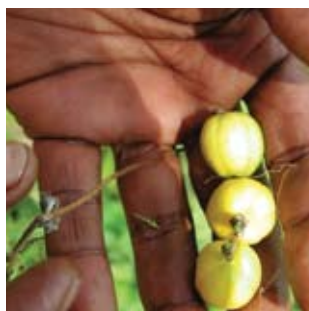
In 1976 the Commonwealth passed the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976* and unalienable freehold title in the Archipelago lands was delivered to the Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Land Trust. The Anindilyakwa Land Council was established under the same Act in 1991 and administrate Anindilyakwa IPA.

Anindilyakwa's stunning scenery and fascinating biodiversity is the backbone of a budding eco-tourism industry. In 2007 the community opened a four-star luxury retreat through their commercial arm, Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Enterprises. The Dugong Beach Resort allows small numbers of eco-tourists to enjoy the island's marine life and unspoilt coasts, as well as giving local mine workers a place to stay.

Like all of Australia's IPAs, Anindilyakwa is part of the National Reserve System, a nationwide network of reserves especially set up to protect examples of Australia's unique landscapes, flora and fauna for current and future generations.

The Australian Government supports the work of Anindilyakwa IPA through the Indigenous Protected Areas and Working on Country elements of the Caring for our Country initiative.

Anindilyakwa IPA is managed under World Conservation Union (IUCN) *Category VI – A Protected Area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems*.



For more information about Indigenous Protected Areas visit www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa or contact the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts' Community Information Unit on Freecall 1800 803 772

